

Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee
Directly Provided Services (DPS) Board

Notes of a meeting held on Monday 6 June 2016

In attendance:

DPS Board: Councillors Davies (Chair), Belsey, Charlton, Charman, Sheppard and Ungar

Officers: Mark Stainton, Assistant Director – Operations, Kay Holden, Head of Service (Learning Disability), Beverley Scott, Operations Manager (Learning Disability DPS), Claire Lee, Senior Democratic Services Adviser, Harvey Winder, Democratic Services Officer

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Councillors Clark and Webb. Councillor Charman substituted for Councillor Webb.

2 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

2.1 There were none.

3 **LEARNING DISABILITY DIRECTLY PROVIDED SERVICES' DEVELOPMENT PLAN - RESIDENTIAL SERVICES & SOUTHVIEW DAY SERVICES**

3.1 Kay Holden introduced the proposals, using powerpoint slides which included photos and floorplans of some of the buildings. She highlighted the following points in relation to the current residential services:

- The buildings are adapted residential buildings and the layout includes narrow corridors which are not ideal for supporting people with mobility difficulties or challenging behaviour.
- There is a lack of private space for residents (kitchen, living and bathroom facilities are shared).
- The three residential services equate to a total area of 669sqm whereas the proposed upstairs residential space at Hookstead would total 823sqm, rising to 937sqm in total when the downstairs dining and living areas are included (these can be used evenings and weekends). Bedrooms would be on average 75% bigger and include ensuite bathrooms.

3.2 She also highlighted the following points in relation to the day service:

- The proposed day service space available at Hookstead is not significantly bigger than at Southview but the layout is much better.
- 29-33 people use the day service each day (47 people use it in total over the course of a week). The proposed new facility could support up to 45 on a daily basis.
- Southview is not a good environment for wheelchairs. It would struggle to provide services in future to new clients coming through from Children's Services with physical needs – Hookstead has been designed to meet these needs.
- There would be a kitchen, dining area and lounge available for the day service. Catering facilities are still to be finalised following further research.

3.3 Finally, Kay summarised the consultation response which had been generally positive with a high level of support for the improved facilities for residents and day service

clients. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had also been generally positive except for the change itself and the impact on one relative who would need to travel further.

3.4 The Board discussed a number of issues arising:

3.5 ***Potential to modify the design to include more accommodation***

The accommodation has been designed to meet the needs of the 16 residents in the three existing residential services. It may be possible to fit one or two additional bedrooms into the building but the gain would be limited due to the structure of the building. In addition, the current specification is relatively modest compared to some other learning disability developments based on self-contained flats.

3.6 ***Use of bungalow in Hookstead grounds***

The bungalow has potential future use as a single dwelling for a client with high level needs. As yet no one for whom this accommodation would be suitable has been identified, so adapting the bungalow is not in the scope for the initial refurbishment and it would require investment. It is currently not in a habitable state.

3.7 ***Level of demand***

The objective in relation to residential accommodation has been to redesign the accommodation available for the existing residents who tend to be long term clients, meaning that there is little turnover. There is a mixed economy of learning disability provision of which DPS is one option.

3.8 ***Status of residential service***

Accommodation can be provided in different ways, for example as Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered residential care or tenanted supported accommodation. In the latter model, the care provided to residents remains regulated by CQC. There would need to be further consideration as to the appropriate model, based on the needs, wishes and level of independence of clients. The overall cost to the public purse is the same in either model. As a residential service, either provider or client can give notice on the contract at any time. A supported accommodation tenancy offers residents more security of tenure and additional control over income, such as being supported to buy their own food.

3.9 ***Shared lounge areas***

The Board raised concerns over whether there was sufficient shared lounge space for the number of residents and was assured that plans include a lounge on each of the two residential floors plus one smaller area. In addition, it is planned to use the ground floor (day service) lounge and dining area as extra space at evenings and weekends. This is more shared space than in the existing homes and by pulling staff together in one location there will be enough staff for appropriate oversight even after savings. The proposed facilities are very different from a previous learning disability facility which had been located at Hookstead some years ago alongside an older peoples service.

3.10 ***Personalisation of bedrooms***

The Board queried whether it was appropriate to offer a choice of bedroom layout if the accommodation could potentially be used by different clients with different preferences in the future, and whether a standard layout would be more cost effective. Given that the residents are long-term clients it is unlikely that the bedrooms will change hands frequently and layout options are limited (i.e. kitchenette or lounge area) rather than varied. Ability/wish to use a kitchenette would not apply to all clients and offering two options increases choice, personalisation and ability to maximise independence.

3.11 ***Sale of existing buildings***

As the buildings were transferred from the NHS any proceeds from their sale need to be reinvested in learning disability services (as is proposed) or returned to the NHS.

3.12 ***Consultation with all residents***

Kay Holden confirmed that every effort had been made to consult all 16 residents and their families and most had been very positive about the plans, with the only significant concerns being around the process of change. The Board suggested a staged move of residents to help smooth the process. The Board also suggested the allocation of bedrooms would need to be carefully managed and that people living in larger numbers may create some new issues which would need additional support e.g. mediation.

3.13 ***Level of need***

It was clarified that all residents have a learning disability and some also have a physical disability. Needs range from support with all aspects of care through to those requiring 24 hour support/supervision but at a lower level. A number of residents have previously lived in long stay hospitals and almost all have had support throughout their lives. The needs of these residents may increase as they become older/frailer so the plans are designed to prepare for future increasing needs as well as resolving current issues. Five residential clients also use the day service so there is plenty of scope to cater for non-residents.

3.14 ***Impact on staff***

The Board was assured that all existing permanent staff could be transferred over to the new location. The service has carried vacancies or used short term recruitment in order to accommodate the planned staffing reductions without redundancies. This continuity of staffing has been an important factor to clients. A reduction in night staff (waking and non-waking) is anticipated as the current night staffing across three sites is relatively heavy compared to need. Staff have been very positive about the plans as they know the limitations of the current settings. A formal staff consultation would take place nearer to the move (starting in October 2016). Increased travel is only an issue for Greenacres as other sites are very close to Hookstead. Any issues can be identified during staff consultation and redeployment considered if necessary.

3.15 The Board then considered its overall view on the proposals, agreeing the following:

- **To support the proposed service changes**, based particularly on:
 - The clear need to update the existing facilities and address issues such as current and potential future mobility/physical disability needs.
 - The significant investment which would be required to improve existing buildings and the limitations of these buildings.
 - The ability to provide much improved facilities and increased personal space at Hookstead.
 - The availability of multiple shared lounge/dining areas at Hookstead.
 - The positive response to the consultation from residents, day centre clients and their families.
- **To express a preference for the residential service to continue to be provided as CQC registered residential care**, whilst recognising that both this model and a supported accommodation model have pros and cons which can be further explored with residents and families in due course.

4 LEARNING DISABILITY DIRECTLY PROVIDED SERVICES' DEVELOPMENT PLAN - LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICES IN HASTINGS AND ROTHER

- 4.1 Kay Holden introduced the proposals, using powerpoint slides which included photos of the existing day service buildings. She highlighted the following points in relation to the current services and the proposed changes:
- The average combined daily attendance at the two main day centres (Conquest Centre and Beeching Park) is 55 per day. They are less than 7 miles apart and travel time between them has reduced due to the new link road. Beeching Park is not operating to full capacity.
 - The service wants to make better use of Working Wonders and Greenwood. Neither is used to full capacity during the day (Greenwood is used to capacity overnight to provide respite care)
 - The service redesign aims to provide a range of complementary services for the Hastings and Rother area as a whole rather than a similar service duplicated in different places.
 - There were 48 responses to the survey, plus a number of meetings and events. Responses resulted in no clear overall view and concerns raised were largely individual e.g. specific travel and transport concerns.
 - The service would put together transition plans to support clients through the change and also believes that many of the concerns have been addressed through the process.
 - The overall aims include better supporting people to move on from services (e.g. by acquiring skills), thus creating more capacity for the future.
 - 55 of 70 clients from the Conquest Centre would need to travel to Beeching Park. 15 of these 55 already receive transport which would continue and transport can be provided for an additional three. Of remaining 37 clients, 34 live with a paid provider and shared transport is being considered. The remaining three people prefer to make their own arrangements or live nearer to Beeching Park than Conquest.

4.2 The Board discussed the following issues arising:

4.3 ***Travel and transport***

Concern was expressed that people may suffer a loss of independence if they are no longer able to make their own way to day services due to travelling longer distances. Kay Holden and Mark Stainton assured the Board that the service has looked carefully at travel arrangements and would support people to retain independence as far as possible. She highlighted that some existing clients of Conquest actually live closer to Beeching Park and that those travelling independently may have a level of need more suited to the skills based service proposed for Working Wonders.

Most people will have access to some form of transport but there are a small number who prefer to make their own arrangements and the service will need to work harder to support these people, including looking at the option of shuttle bus from Working Wonders to Beeching Park.

4.4 ***Journey times***

Concern was expressed about potentially lengthy bus journeys and the impact of this on time spent at the day service. Mark Stainton explained that all ASC services work to an absolutely maximum journey time of 90 mins and most journeys are less than this. There has not been a particular issue with rush hour traffic delaying buses.

4.5 ***Investment in Beeching Park over Conquest Centre***

The Board queried why the recommendation is to invest in Beeching Park rather than Conquest Centre. Kay Holden explained that the Conquest building is an industrial estate type building with large rooms. A feasibility study concluded that with the level of

capital available it would be possible to break down the spaces into smaller rooms but this would leave some rooms without windows and with access some rooms via others. The ideal way to redesign the space would cost more than the available budget. Beeching Park is easier and cheaper to remodel as the work is more about opening up rooms, and it is already a brighter, more modern building. In addition, it is possible to keep a presence on the Conquest site via Working Wonders whereas if the situation was reversed it would result in a big concentration of services in St Leonards and little in Bexhill.

4.6 **Consultation responses**

In response to concerns over the level of response to the consultation survey compared to the number of clients using the service, Kay Holden agreed that the survey response was quite low despite best efforts, but highlighted that this was one part of the consultation activity, along with information events which had been well attended. Not everyone attending events or meetings chose to reply to the survey and it is not possible to know why this was.

4.7 **Service model**

The aim of the proposed service model is to offer a range of different services and a focus on outreach to community activities, which over time will make buildings less important as they become hubs rather than the main/sole focus of services. The proposal to invest in Working Wonders aims to meet different, skills related, needs so it would not be appropriate in this context to expand its use to a more generic day service as this would continue the duplication of service seen today. Working Wonders will be able to support 25 clients per day so more people than this will use it over the course of a week as some clients will have a mix of sessions at Working Wonders and Beeching Park.

4.8 **Accessibility of services**

The Board queried how the plans fit with the East Sussex Better Together philosophy of bringing services as close to home as possible. Mark Stainton agreed that local accessibility is a key aim but this has to be balanced against quality and resilience of care, and cost. These services have issues in relation to quality of environment and it is sometimes necessary to take a decision to focus resources to provide quality of service within what we can afford. It is not financially possible to provide multiple sites and these proposals represent a compromise which retains a sizeable service in St Leonards as well as Bexhill.

4.9 **Alternative options**

The Board queried whether potential alternative sites such as the Isabel Blackman Centre (IBC) in Hastings had been considered. Mark Stainton considered that the IBC upstairs vacant area would not be a safe or suitable place for a day service, even with a fireproof lift, due to fire evacuation concerns. Capital receipts from the sale of the existing buildings would not be significant enough to fund multiple sites as they are largely industrial buildings on estates of relatively low value.

4.10 The Board then considered its overall view on the proposals as follows:

- There was **general agreement that the Conquest Centre is no longer suitable** for day service provision.
- There was **general agreement with the outreach approach** being pursued and support for this as the philosophy across all the services.
- There were **differing views on whether the proposals are the best way forward**:
 - The majority of the Board supported the proposals based on the benefits of a graduated/differentiated service model which can meet differing needs whilst making best use of available resources.

- Cllr Charman expressed concern about the loss of a service from Hastings in the context of higher levels of deprivation and potentially higher demand. She also expressed concern about the disruption to clients through additional travel and potential withdrawal of clients from day services as a result. Her preference was to look at retaining a more local model catering for more mixed needs.
- Cllr Ungar expressed a preference for a series of units which are more locally based, ultimately funded through the sale of larger sites.
- There was general agreement that, if the proposals were to go ahead, **transport is a key issue** and clients would need to be supported as much as possible in this regard.